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Town of North Reading
Massachusetts

Community Planning

TOWN CLERK
NORTH READING, MA

MINUTES

Tuesday, December 20, 2016

Mr. Warren Pearce, Chairperson called the Tuesday, December 20, 2016 meeting of the Community Planning Commission to order at 7:00p.m. in Room 14 of the North Reading Town Hall, 235 North Street, North Reading, MA.

MEMBERS

PRESENT:

Warren Pearce, Chairperson
William Bellavance, Vice Chairperson
Jonathan Cody, Clerk
Christopher B. Hayden
Joseph Veno

STAFF

PRESENT:

Danielle McKnight, AICP
Town Planner/Community Planning Administrator
Debra Savarese, Administrative Assistant

Mr. Pearce informed all present that the meeting is being recorded.

Housing Production Plan

Mrs. McKnight stated that Karen Sunnarborg, consultant to the town will be giving a presentation this evening in regard to the Housing Production Plan. Also, Carl Russo, Rita Mullen, Sue Magner of Veteran Services, Mary Prenney and Michele Mawn of Senior Housing and Rich Wallner, have expressed interest in affordable housing and have volunteered to participate.

Karen Sunnarborg submitted a short description of the major requirements for the Housing Production Plan to the planning board. (see attached) She stated that the Housing Production Plan grew out of Chapter 40B. It was basically a subset of the Comprehensive Permit Regulations that was intended to provide greater local control over housing development. Such that, if a community prepared a housing plan that met all of the requirements of the State and produced 1% of its year round housing stock, as affordable, based on the State's definition of affordability, It could become what is called "certified" and it would have a period of time where it would be able to deny what it determined be "inappropriate" Comprehensive Permit applications without the developer's ability to appeal the decision. A lot of towns have been attracted by this potential ability to be able to deny an appropriate 40B application. But, other towns have done it just for the sole purpose of having a plan guides, for the development, of not only affordable housing, but smart growth development. So, as communities grow they are directing resources and development to appropriate areas of town that includes public benefits. Such as, some amount of affordable housing. The hand-out provides a simple definition of the housing production and it also provides some of the categories of strategies that have to be included in the plan. The first part of the plan, besides the executive summary, is a very comprehensive housing needs assessment. The State really wants the town to look at historic trends, future projections on demographics, economics, housing characteristics, marketing conditions and a whole range of other types of important indicators of housing need. The town needs to come up with important housing needs that are then to be addressed in the other sections of the housing plan, including strategies that address those needs based on the town's priorities, preferences and production goal that half of the year's 1% housing stock also informed by the strategies and needs incorporated in the plan. The term of the plan is five years and the plans have to be approved by the planning board and the Board of Selectmen. Once the plans have been submitted to the State there is a turn-around of a couple of months. The other part is that the State likes to see some real evidence of community engagement. So, opportunities would get input from community residents, local leaders and housing stake holders, it is really an important piece, beyond just collecting lots data and analyzing market.

Mr. Pearce stated that one of the issues that arises when discussing affordable housing is the fact that the town does not have public transportation and it begins to defeat the definition of affordable, which was one of the conditions for the 40R, but the town was able to get approval without it.

Rita Mullen stated that they are ready to do what is needed.

Karen Sunnarborg stated that participation from residents is hard to get and the town should hold a public forum to discuss the housing production plan. If the town has access to public forum's being televised, it is a great way to get the information out to the residents.

Susan Magner stated that most seniors do not have accessibility or the capability to review issues on the town website. If a public forum is held it should be advertised in the newspaper. When the houses are being designed they should be handicap accessible.

Karl Russo stated that he has been looking for a handicap accessible home and has been unable to find one to meet his needs. He believes that the potential buyer should have the option to have the house customized to meet their needs.

Rita Mullen stated that she thought that when the JT Berry site was being built that there would be affordable housing, but that is not the case.

Rich Wallner stated that 20% of the town's population is over 60. They do not want to move out of the town, but most do not have the option to stay because of the cost.

Mr. O'Leary, representing the Board of Selectmen asked if there were any State programs which allowed for over 55, age restricted that are affordable.

Mr. Pearce stated that there are State programs.

Karen Sunnarborg stated that the DHCD is the major State funding agency. They regularly finance senior housing and there are other financing programs that can help.

Mr. Pearce stated that his understanding of "affordable" is that the State looks at the immediate income of the area and then makes a determination based on that.

Mr. Stephen O'Leary stated that this is what happened at the JT Berry site.

Karen Sunnarborg stated that it really depends on how the project is financed.

Jane Krieger of 22 Cherry Street stated that the rental cost should be based on the percentage of the individual income.

20 Main Street – SPR – cont. P.H. 8:00pm

Mr. Brian Dundon, Site Civil Engineer for R.J. O'Connell & Associates, Inc. stated that the proposal is to perform a renovation at Eastgate Plaza which is located at the intersection of Main & Park Street. The site is currently developed and consists of two freestanding buildings. A 13,900 sq. ft. liquor store and a 29,600 sq. ft. strip center. There are four access points to the property, one on Park Street, un-signalized and three on Main Street. There are 199 parking spaces currently provided on site to support the development program. It is in the Highway and Overlay (Park & Trail Crossing) Districts. The CVS Pharmacy is currently located in the strip mall and would like to relocate on the premises into a 13,200 sq. ft. freestanding building with a drive-up window to accommodate their customers. The phasing would be to construct the new building and relocate CVS Pharmacy, the Eastgate Liquors would then relocate to the existing CVS space and the building that currently houses Eastgate Liquors would be razed. There are also proposed site improvements which are: 1) move the existing access point on Park Street away from the intersection by approximately 50' and the curb cut, closest to the intersection on Main Street would be closed. 2) An additional 36 parking spaces will be added to the site, 80 of the parking spaces will be allocated to the new CVS Pharmacy. 3) As part of the CVS improvements, a minimum 25' landscaped buffer along Main and Park Street will be provided. 4) The existing drainage ditch in the rear of the property which currently flows to a wetland resource area, with outlets on Park Street. A piece of this area has been incorporated into the Stormwater Management guide and will be filled in.

At the September 6th, meeting the Town Engineer's memo recommended that the Stormwater Management and traffic component be subject to an independent peer review by a consultant chosen by the town. The town selected Design Consultants, Inc. to do the review. They received correspondence in September regarding the traffic and stormwater. The plans and documents were revised. They received a second request for minor changes and they are in the mist of addressing these comments.

Mr. Pearce asked what the purpose of the existing drainage ditch is.

Mr. Dundon stated that purpose was to handle stormwater management associated with the site.

Mr. Eugene Sullivan of Eugene T. Sullivan, Inc. stated that there were a bunch of outfalls for parking areas or existing roof leaders coming out in different portions to the rear of the site that drained down to a series of headwalls over to the wetlands.

Mr. Pearce asked if it was collecting water from the street of the abutting residential properties.

Mr. Sullivan stated that it did not. There is a stream that goes out of the wetland into the upper left corner that picks up the drainage from Burditt Road.

Gerri Gleisberg of 3 Burditt Road stated that this information is incorrect. The stream is practically in her back yard and her yard gets flooded.

Mr. Dundon stated that with respect to some of the additional site plan modifications or additions they have made to the sets since their initial submission that they took away from the meeting with the planning board in September, they incorporated in some questions regarding truck circulation and whether or not they will have clear access or conflicts. They included in the updated set that was submitted in September, a truck circulation plan that simulated a tractor-trailer truck. Since that time they have had correspondence with Deputy Chief Galvin who requested a fire truck simulation be done, as well. They prepared the plan and it was submitted to him informally last Thursday. They received correspondence back this week that the simulation route was accepted and all he asked for was a stamped plan with the conclusion of the permitting process and they agreed to do this.

They identified the loading area for the relocated Eastgate Liquors, the change to the sidewalk to the west side and snow storage, as requested. These changes have been made to the site plans.

They met with the abutters of Burditt Road on December 15, 2016, as requested by Mr. Steve O'Leary, to discuss their concerns: (hours of operation, screening & buffering, noise, lighting, rodent control). Their goals in addressing those concerns are as follows: Currently, there is a wood stockade fence that runs along the perimeter on the rear of the residential properties. Since they are filling in the ditch they were going to replace the fence, and then on the project side add additional screening (evergreens, pine trees). But, with their discussions with the abutters concern for noise and screening, was to construct an 8' high, acoustical sound barrier fence that would be 5' off of the property line, behind the fence they would install evergreens (abutters requested arborvitaes, junipers and groundcover) and leave the existing fence. They also heard concerns that the abutters are hearing noises, late at night, contributed by the deliveries. They understand the Town of North Reading has an ordinance in place that limits deliveries to certain hours of the day and they are in agreement to comply with this. The owner, John Lucci will be an effort to educate the existing tenants and put them on notice that deliveries/noise cannot be made late at night.

They are aware of the rodent issue that happened five years ago, and Mr. Lucci solved the problem and has not heard of any more complaints. During construction they agreed that they would implement a pest management plan, prior to the start of construction, with a licensed exterminator and will be monitored on a monthly basis. These reports will be submitted to the planning and board of health departments.

They submitted a detailed response in regard to the Board of Health memo (dated 8/11/2016), He received another letter from the Board of Health Director, Bob Bracey (dated 12/2016) and they are essentially down to two items: 1) Review construction prevention plan regarding how they are going to mitigate dust, noise and potential health issues. They will submit the swift plan to the Board of Health, but he would also like to point out that the swift report was also asked for by Design Consultants, Inc. who accepted the report. 2) The Board of Health Director, also asked to review the management plan before it is implemented. In addition, they have allocated six to seven dumpsters that will be screened, to be used by the existing tenants.

The site is located in the Overlay (Park & Trail) District and they would be asking for waivers.

- 1) Site lighting (height of site light poles cannot exceed 12'). They were requesting 28' light poles, but they have reduced it to 21' (a 3' base with a 19' pole). The reason for the request is to avoid being hit by cars, and plows.
- 2) Footcandle readings: The goal is a minimum of 2' to 4'. They have achieved a 2 to 4 within the parking lot with the exception of the main side drive and in front of the CVS entry area. The reason for this is that there is building lighting – when you take into account the building and parking lighting it exceeds to the 4' candle lighting. The range will be between 5' and 9'.
- 3) Landscaping Requirements: There is a requirement that a 5' landscape planting strip be installed around 60% of the perimeter of the building. Currently the existing building does not provide any landscaping around the building. It is not conducive to have a landscape strip around the north and rear of the CVS building. There is also a sidewalk being installed in front of the building.
- 4) Another requirement was that within this district that 50% of the site be greenspace. The site today does not comply with that. Currently 40% of the lot is landscaped and they are asking upon completion of the improvements that it be 29½%.
- 5) It also mentions that the planning board has the ability to reduce it up to 20%, provided that a pedestrian bikeway or a permanent easement is provided for pedestrian bikes and automobile access. They will need a little guidance on this because they are unsure if the board would want a permanent easement across the property because they abut residential properties. They believe that they have achieved the pedestrian, bikeway and vehicle access to the site on the plan.

Mr. Hayden asked if 155 parking spaces are required for the buildings.

Mr. Dundon stated that they are providing 235 parking spaces, 156 are required.

Mr. Hayden asked if they were going to fix the right hand parking, near the entrance that has always been an issue. 60% of the site is being affected, adding 3,000 sq. ft. to the original building, adding a new building and razing a building. He has an issue with this because where the existing three planters were put is causing a safety issue.

Mr. Dundon stated that he would look at this area.

Mr. Pearce stated that if there is bicycle access, there are no bicycle racks.

Mr. Dundon stated that the plan would be to put two bike racks, one near the CVS and the second would be adjacent to the Autozone.

Mr. Bellavance asked what the flow is of the delivery trucks.

Mr. Dundon stated that the plan is to have the deliveries enter through Park Street and exit onto Main Street. The flow would be a counter clockwise action.

Mr. Bellavance stated that he believes that this is a safety issue. If a vehicle goes to the CVS drive-thru, the view is blocked by a dumpster and when the vehicle turns an 18-wheeler comes around the corner. He does not like the dumpster location and they should take another look at the flow pattern. He thinks that going counter clockwise around the whole property would be better.

Mr. Hayden suggested that the vehicle traffic leaving the CVS should go out from between the two buildings or go right, all the way around. It will be longer, but they are in a car.

Mr. Dundon stated that he would look at this and see if there were any changes that could be made.

Mr. Pearce suggested that if they go in on the left side and they would exit to the front of the building.

Mr. Dundon stated that the driver would not be on the right side for the drive-thru window.

Mr. Bellavance stated that this is a three phase plan. He would suggest that they talk to the contractor in regard to a lay-down plan to discuss how people will be entering the site while the construction is going on.

Mr. Dundon stated that should permits be issued, they will submit a phasing plan to the planning department.

Mr. Hayden asked if there would be any lighting on the rear of the buildings.

Mr. Dundon stated that there is no proposal for lighting on the rear of the existing or new building. If there is lighting for the existing strip, its existing wall pack lighting, if it is not, it will be shielded to be directed downward.

Mr. Hayden stated that he is concerned with safety, with no lighting for the drive-thru area. If a couple of poles are added to the other side of the driveway with LED lights that are shielded it will make the driveway safe.

Mr. Dundon stated that they would review this request.

Mr. Pearce stated that he would like to have the engineer explain the proposal for the ditch that runs along the rear of the property. He would like to know specifically what will be happening on the north side of the property.

Mr. Sullivan stated that the ditch on the northern side will remain, but a section of the ditch is going to be removed. All of the ditches collect on the 20 Main Street property at the headwall, the water then runs into a wetland and drains into the Park Street drainage. From the edge of the wetland area going off 20 Main Street property and onto 3 Burditt Road property, there is a continuous ditch that stormwater and catch basins connect to and then flow into Park Street.

Mr. Bryce Hillman of BKA Architects, Inc. stated that he is the project manager. When they came to the planning meeting in September he presented a building that had a more modern look and it was not received well, so they changed the design of the building and to add a colonial style. A gable on the right hand side with the mansard will travel the length of the building; two gable facades will be located on the Park Street side, heading toward the receiving door and a gable over the front door with a large transom and canopy. Beige siding, white finish trim, brick and asphalt shingles have been added to the building.

Mr. Veno asked what the little window at the back of the building is for.

Mr. Hillman stated that window is for the pharmacist to have visibility of the vehicles.

Mr. Bellavance stated that an externally lit sign at the front of the building will look good on the building.

Mr. Pearce asked if they had any information on the traffic.

Mr. Dundon stated that the traffic was reviewed by Design Consultants, Inc., but Giles Ham, P>E of Vannesse & Associates is not present to review.

Mike Gosine of 5 Burditt Road stated that he is concerned with water and noise and would like to be assured that a fence will be constructed.

Nancy Omogrosso 9 Burditt Road stated that she is concerned with the traffic going onto Park Street. She would also like the fence height to be as high as allowed in this area.

Mr. Pearce stated that there will be set hours for deliveries and trash pick-up on this site.

Janice Brown of 15 Burditt Road stated that she would prefer that a sound barrier fence be constructed.

Mr. Dundon stated that they are reviewing the products.

Mr. Stephen O'Leary stated that he would like to acknowledge the Lucci team in addressing the concerns of the abutters.

Public Hearing continued to 2/21/2017 @ 8:00PM.

35 Main Street (disc.)

Mr. Jonathan Hall of Arenhall Corp. stated that the planning board has reviewed three different options for the construction of a storage building. Option #1: was to keep the existing bowling alley, moving Andrea's Pizza into the building and construct a new self-storage. Option #2: Add retail to the new building, but it would require a substantial variance for parking, even though the use does not require it. Option #3: Dormers to be added around the side of the building, add 12,500 sq. ft. of retail space and a drive-thru for the self-storage to access all three floors. The Planning board was in favor of Option #3, but there was concern with the Fire Department approving access to only three sides of the building. He met with Deputy Chief Galvin and he was fine with the access and turning radius.

Mr. Hayden asked who wide the tunnel is and if he would be counting those as parking spaces.

Mr. Hall stated that the tunnel is 30' in width. The cars can park and pass.

Attorney Mark Bobrowski of Blatman, Bobrowski, Mead & Talerman, LLC stated that they counted them for the 43 parking spaces, but there was discussion at the last meeting whether or not they could be counted because they were internal.

Mr. Pearce stated that this is really a moot point because they are going to need a bigger variance than that.

Mr. Hall stated that there was also mention of a pedestrian/bicycle path in the right-of-way to Damon Street. Some of the board members thought that it would be a good idea, but some thought that Damon Street residents would not approve or give the easement. There was also mention of an easement for vehicle travel through to the McDonald's site.

Mr. Pearce stated that he would like the connection.

Mr. Hayden asked if the connection could be further back on the property.

Mr. Hall stated that McDonald's does have a second parking lot at the rear of the property, but it would go across the pedestrian walkway.

Mr. Veno stated that he does not believe that McDonald's would approve the connection in the front because they have angled parking and would lose spaces.

Mr. Hall stated that they have added the 5 to get to the 60%, of the 5' buffer, for greenspace around the building. They had to move the building forward to be out of the wetland setback.

Mr. Matt Waterman of Landtech Consultants, Inc. stated that the option that provides the most greenspace, the least amount of parking and has the retail and drive-thru with 43 spaces. The other option did not include any retail, but meets the parking requirements (90 spaces) for a storage facility, for this district. The building is further back with double row of parking along the frontage; it meets all of the buffer and screening, sidewalk access to Damon Street off of Main Street.

Howard Hall of Arenhall Corp. stated that they do not need 92 spaces for the storage facility. They could make a better building, but will follow the bylaw.

Mr. Pearce stated that they would like to have a formal application filed with the planning department. They will review the plan and if they find it acceptable, a memo will be sent to the Board of Appeals in support of the 43 parking spaces, plus 8 internal spaces. He appreciates the work that was done by Arenhall Corp.

Blueberry Woods (bond release)

Mr. Cody moved, seconded by Mr. Hayden and voted 5-0:

that the Community Planning Commission vote to release the bond for the Blueberry Woods subdivision in the amount of \$4,546.69.

87 Concord Street – (consultant fees release)

Mr. Cody voted, seconded by Mr. Hayden and voted 5-0:

that the Community Planning vote to release the remaining consultant fees for 87 Concord Street in the amount of \$650.00

Rahnden Terrace – Inspection money release

Mr. Cody moved, seconded by Mr. Veno and voted 5-0:

that the Community Planning Commission vote to release the remaining inspection funds for the Rahnden Terrace Subdivision in the amount of \$200.00.

The Greens – (new) Fire Testing Regulations

Mrs. McKnight stated that when the Greens received their Special Permit on November 10, 1981 there was a Fire and Alarm Regulation that the Fire Department had to approve. The Greens then put into their Condo Bylaws that the Community Planning Commission would need to approve any changes made to these regulations. She told them that the Commission does not have any authority over these changes, but if necessary the Commission would follow the recommendations of the North Reading Fire Chief. Chief Warnock has approved the new bylaws and has asked the Commission to approve.

Mr. Cody moved, seconded by Mr. Bellavance and voted 5-0:

that the Community Planning Commission approves the report of the North Reading Fire Chief per his correspondence of 9/29/2016 regarding the new fire testing regulations proposed by the Greens, as specified in their draft bylaw document dated 9/23/2016.

Minutes

Mr. Hayden moved, seconded by Mr. Veno and voted 5-0:

that the Community Planning Commission vote to accept the minutes of November 15, 2016 as written.

Mr. Cody moved, seconded by Mr. Hayden and voted 4-0: (Mr. Cody abstained)

that the Community Planning Commission vote to accept the minutes of August 25, 2015 minutes as written.

Planning Administrator Update**Heffron Property – 66 Winter Street**

Mrs. McKnight stated that Ken Heffron and Developer, Joe Langone came in to speak with her today. He submitted photos of buildings similar to what he would like to design on his site and asked her to share the photos with the commission. He is looking forward to the continuation of the zoning changes that the commission is working on in regard to Highway Business District,

including residential. He wants to do a residential mixed used on his site with retail space on the bottom and residential on the top. Initially, he had asked if the town wanted the property for municipal use and she has broached this with the Town Administrator and the Board of Selectmen were made aware, but she does not believe that they will be able to come to a decision on his timeline.

EDC Meeting update

Mr. Bellavance stated that they received five proposals for the JT Berry site:

- 1) Pulte Homes of New England – 30 million dollars – 55+, approximately 3 million in tax revenue.
- 2) Fore Kicks - 2.5 million, assessed value of the land, approximately \$30,000.00 in tax revenue.
- 3) Lincoln properties - 450 units, 20% affordable, no age restriction and extend the 40R.
- 4) Garden Homes - 15 million - 480 apartments to rent.
- 5) Symes Development – 5 million – tax revenue \$65,000. – 140 units and 90 townhouses.

Adjournment at 10:30PM

Respectfully submitted,


Jonathan Cody, Clerk